



Escalon Police Department

2040 McHenry Avenue, Escalon, California 95320
(209) 691-7300 - FAX (209) 838-6561

Mike Harden, Interim Chief of Police



Crime Prevention - Residential

Home Security Inspection

Whether you are new to Escalon or a long time resident, this free service will prove invaluable. Representatives from EPD will conduct an on-site custom security inspection of your home or apartment at your convenience. You will be given information and training on the most effective locks, alarm systems, and lighting specific to your home and your area. The investment of time that is necessary for the inspection will pay huge dividends, both in physical security and in peace of mind. This service is provided free of charge to Escalon residents. If you would like this service contact Dorothy Vandagriff at 691-7301 or e-mail her at dvandagriff@cityofescalon.org.

Home Security Tips

- Always keep doors secured with deadbolt locks. Exterior doors should be solid core wood. (1¾ inches thick) or metal.
- Use secure locks on windows and sliding patio doors. Hardware is available that will allow windows and sliders to be partially opened during warm weather, yet maintain security. Place a metal or wooden rod in the track of sliding glass doors.
- Have good lighting, in working condition, at all entrances. Keep all exterior lights on throughout the night. Install motion detector devices/lights around the outside your home. Keep your home well-lit inside and out. When away, have lights set on a timer. Never return home to a dark house.
- Install a viewer in your door. Make sure you know who is at the door before you open it. Do not rely on chain locks. Insist on identification from repair and sales persons. If in doubt, call their company to verify their identity. Do not admit persons asking to use your telephone. Offer to make the call for them.
- If you come home and find a door or window open or signs of forced entry, do not enter. Call the police for assistance.
- Know your neighbors, and work out a mutual watch and warning system to prevent burglaries and other break-ins.
- Identify your belongings by engraving your driver's license or Department of Motor Vehicles identification number on your possessions.
- Do not hide spare keys outside. Give them to a trusted neighbor. If away for any length of time, have a neighbor pick up mail, papers, flyers, and take out trash or have to Post Office hold your mail until your return.
- If you live in an apartment or condominium, be attentive and careful if you are alone in the laundry room or garage.
- Have the locks re-keyed when you move into a new home.

Vacation Watch

The Escalon Police Department offers vacation checks. Forms for the vacation check can be picked up at the police department. A completed form can be e-mailed and sent to Dorothy Vandagriff at dvandariff@cityofescalon.org or faxed to (209) 838-6591.

The Escalon Police department assumes no liability should theft or damage occurring to the property. Security/vacation checks are performed as a courtesy and only as time permits. You should have newspapers and mail picked up or stopped while on vacation; as well as having someone take care of pets, lawn, gardening etc.

What Does Suspicious Look Like?

Suspicious Vehicles

- Vehicles, whether occupied or not, may be suspicious or signify a crime in progress. When you see a suspicious vehicle, try to remember the make, color, and the license plate. Write down as much information as possible. Examples of Suspicious Vehicles:
- Vehicles being loaded with valuables may signify a theft or burglary, especially if at an unusual hour or location, even if the vehicle is a legitimate looking commercial unit, such as a repair vehicle, moving van, etc.
- Vehicles making aimless or repetitive movements, particularly if near schools, parks, or playgrounds could raise suspicion if observed at an unusual hour or location. Such actions may indicate the occupant is “casing” the area for possible theft, burglary, or other criminal activity.
- Apparent business transactions conducted from a vehicle, especially if around schools or parks, and if juveniles are involved, could be indicative of drug dealings or the sale of stolen property.
- Abandoned vehicles may be stolen.
- Persons – especially if juveniles or females—being forced into vehicles may signify a possible kidnapping.
- A stranger in a car stopping to beckon a child.
- Vehicles parked in remote areas may be involved with drug or alcohol usage or sexual assault.
- Vehicles containing weapons would be suspicious under most circumstances. While some suspicious situations could have innocent explanations, the Escalon Police Department would rather investigate than be called when it’s too late. Generally, anyone who seems slightly “out of place” for an area or time of day may be considered suspicious. Be observant.

Suspicious Persons

The following behaviors may indicate a suspicious person:

- Anyone entering your neighbor’s house, when you know they are not there, could possibly be a burglar.
- Someone waiting in front of a house, particularly if owners are absent.
- Peering into a parked car (may be looking for a car to steal or for valuables left in the car).
- Waiting in front of, entering or leaving a business after hours may indicate a burglary.

- Soliciting door-to-door, refusing to show a business license, or are seen peering into windows or entering side or rear yards.
- Going door-to-door in a residential area and, if after a few houses are visited, one or more of the subjects goes into a back or side yard. More suspicious if another subject remains in the front when this occurs.
- Forcing entrance to or tampering with a residence, business, vehicle, etc. is suspicious under most circumstances.
- Running, especially if something of value is being carried.
- Posing as utilities personnel but without proper uniform or identification.
- Loitering around schools, parks, secluded areas, or in the neighborhood - could be sex offenders.
- Exhibiting unusual mental or physical symptoms may be under the influence of drugs.
- A child resisting the advances of an adult.

Other Unusual Situations

- A person switching vehicles, especially in a public place, could be “dumping” a stolen vehicle or may have just committed a crime.
- Continuous “repair” operations at a non-business location may indicate illegal activities, such as stolen property being stripped, repainted or otherwise altered.
- Also persons detaching mechanical parts or accessories from a vehicle.
- Open or broken doors or windows at a closed business or residence when the owners are absent may signify a burglary in progress or already completed.
- Unusual noises such as gunshots, screaming, sounds of combat, barking dogs or anything suggestive of foul play or illegal activity.
- Offers of merchandise or services at ridiculously low prices. (If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.)
- Heavy foot traffic to and from a residence, if it occurs frequently, on a daily or very regular basis, especially during late or unusual hours, might indicate drug activity.

Situations Involving Property

- Large amounts of property in private homes or garages may indicate stolen property, especially if items are in good condition, but are not in use.
- Property not normally found in vehicles (TV sets, un-mounted CD players, loose auto parts, etc.) can be suspicious if observed at unusual hours or locations.
- Property carried by persons on foot is not suspicious in general, unless it is at an odd hour or in an unusual place. It is particularly questionable if the person is running and the property is not wrapped (as if just purchased).

Your Help Is Needed

- If you see a crime being committed, report it immediately and accurately.
- If you are the victim of a crime, report it as soon as possible. Even a five minute delay in reporting can significantly reduce the chance of catching the criminal.

Write It Down!

- As soon as possible, write down anything and everything you can remember. Do not rely on your memory. It is very easy to get things mixed up or forget details—especially if you were a victim of a crime.
- Be as precise as you can and try to avoid guessing. Incorrect information is actually worse than no information at all.
- Don't worry about being embarrassed, even if your suspicions turn out to be unfounded, think of what could happen if you don't act!